

FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS

June 19, 1935

Europe's Struggle for Security

BY VERA MICHELES DEAN

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY BY THE

Foreign Policy Association, Incorporated

EIGHT WEST FORTIETH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

VOLUME XI NUMBER 8 25¢ a copy \$5.00 a year

Europe's Struggle for Security

BY VERA MICHELES DEAN

with the aid of the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

INTRODUCTION

FEAR OF GERMAN AGGRESSION

IN his Reichstag speech of May 21¹ Chancellor Hitler revealed that Germany, faced by an internal economic crisis, sincerely wants preservation of peace, but has not abandoned its desire for territorial revision which it hopes to satisfy by peaceful means. Many European observers recognize the inequities of the Versailles territorial settlement and urge their adjustment under Article XIX of the League Covenant, providing for revision of treaties which have become inapplicable. The principal difficulty involved in territorial revision is that Nazi aspirations, based on racial rather than geographical considerations, embrace territories which had never formed part of the German Empire—notably Austria, the western portion of Czechoslovakia and Soviet Ukraine. The task of persuading Belgium, Denmark, Lithuania and Poland to cede voluntarily the territories they obtained from Germany in 1919 would prove a sufficiently formidable test for European diplomacy. But it is even more difficult to conceive that France, Italy and the Little Entente states would peacefully acquiesce in German absorption of Austria and part of Czechoslovakia, or that the Soviet Union would view with equanimity Nazi expansion to the East.

Yet it is clear from Hitler's speech, pacific as it was in tone, that he has in no way departed from the program laid down in *Mein Kampf*.^{1a} He wants at all costs to remain on good terms with Britain; he is consequently ready to abide by the Locarno treaties guaranteeing Germany's frontier with France and Belgium, to make concessions on the size of the German navy, and to consider an

air pact of non-aggression and mutual assistance in the West. His reassurances concerning the Western *status quo* are in striking contrast to his declarations on Central and Eastern Europe. He continues to regard communism as the principal menace to the security of the Nazi state; refuses to conclude a non-aggression pact with the U.S.S.R. or Lithuania, which he attacks for its treatment of Memel Nazis; and apparently hopes to localize potential war areas in the East, avoiding intervention by the Western powers. Nor does he give any indication that he has abandoned his former desire to associate Austria with a Greater Germany.

Uncertainty regarding Nazi designs in Central and Eastern Europe is largely responsible for the *malaise* which has dominated the continent since Hitler came to power.^{1b} True, Germany is not alone in seeking territorial revision. But Hungary and Bulgaria, which are equally dissatisfied with the peace treaties, are not in a position to enforce their demands; while Italy, which desires additional territory, hopes to obtain it not in Europe but in Africa. Germany alone of the revisionist countries is sufficiently strong in man-power and technical equipment to press its claims by force if necessary. Nazi aspirations, moreover, directly menace the territorial integrity of over half a dozen states containing German minorities, and indirectly threaten all countries which believe that war can no longer be localized and that an obscure border incident in Schleswig or Lithuania might serve as the pretext for another world conflict.

To forestall this eventuality, the European powers have followed two main courses which at first sight appear utterly incompatible. On the one hand they have not only remained armed, in the expectation that a disarmed and amputated Germany

1. For complete text of this speech, cf. *Voelkischer Beobachter*, May 22, 1935.

1a. For an analysis of this program, cf. Mildred S. Wertheimer, "Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy Reports*, June 5, 1935.

1b. For survey of the European diplomatic situation in 1933 and 1934, cf. Vera Micheles Dean, "Political Realignments in Europe," and "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," *Foreign Policy Reports*, May 10, 1933 and May 9, 1934.

FOREIGN POLICY REPORTS, VOLUME XI, NUMBER 8, JUNE 19, 1935

Published by-weekly by the FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Incorporated, 8 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y., U. S. A. RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL, *President*; WILLIAM T. STONE, *Vice President and Washington representative*; VERA MICHELES DEAN, *Editor*; HELEN TERRY, *Assistant Editor*. *Research Associates*: T. A. BISSON, VERA MICHELES DEAN, WILLIAM KOREN, JR., HELEN H. MOORHEAD, DAVID H. POPPER, ONA K. D. RINGWOOD, CHARLES A. THOMSON, M. S. WERTHEIMER, JOHN C. DEWILDE. Subscription Rates: \$5.00 a year; to F. P. A. members \$3.00; single copies 25 cents. Entered as second-class matter on March 31, 1931 at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

would sooner or later attempt to recover its pre-war position, but have used German rearmament as an excuse for increasing their already heavy armaments; and they have woven a network of bilateral and regional pacts of non-aggression and mutual assistance which differ little from the pre-war alliances largely responsible for the outbreak of the World War. On the other hand, they have sought to bolster up the collective system of security as represented by the League of Nations, and to place their alliances within the framework and at the disposal of the League for use against an aggressor. The first of these courses has been favored by the Soviet Union, Italy, the Little Entente, the Balkan bloc and the Baltic states—all of which would in one way or another be affected by German expansion into Austria or Eastern Europe. The second has been increasingly supported by Captain Anthony Eden, British Minister for League of Nations Affairs and by the French Foreign Minister, M. Laval. Not that Britain and France have refrained from the first course—both have increased their armaments, and the latter has concluded pacts of mutual assistance—but they have indicated that all arrangements against an aggressor must be placed under the aegis of the League. Should their point of view prevail, fear of Nazi aggression may yet succeed in making the collective system more effective than it has ever proved in the past. The success of the League in assuring security, however, depends on the foreign policies of its individual European members, which in turn are determined by geographical, political, economic and psychological factors.

FOREIGN POLICIES OF PRINCIPAL STATES

Germany's apparent bid for military predominance in Europe has confronted Britain with the most crucial decision since 1914. The British are even more alarmed by Nazi air and submarine construction today than by German naval preparations before the World War, and the methods of the Hitler government have created far greater hostility in Britain than the Kaiser's saber rattlings. While some British isolationists like Lord Beaverbrook favor complete aloofness from the continental struggle, the rapid development of aerial warfare, to which the British Isles with their compact and densely populated territory are peculiarly vulnerable, precludes British neutrality in European affairs. Premier Stanley Baldwin defined the situation in a phrase which has become historic when he said on July 30, 1934 that Britain's frontier lies on the Rhine.² Should Britain become involved in war with Germany, which now boasts an air force

superior to that of the British, it will need anti-aircraft protection not only on its own territory, but on that of intervening countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and France. Britain consequently cannot remain indifferent to the fate of these countries.

Having recognized its inability to maintain a position of "splendid isolation," Britain might have pursued one of two courses: it might have formed military alliances with France, Italy, the Soviet Union and other countries interested in preservation of the *status quo*, thus openly aligning itself against Germany; or it might have strengthened the collective system, leaving the way open for Germany's return to the League. The first course is opposed by British Liberals and Laborites, whose opinion cannot be disregarded by the government when a general election is in the offing. The opposition, while vigorously criticising the Nazi dictatorship, favors the second course. It argues that Hitlerism is the product of the Versailles system; that the Allies are at least as much to blame for the present situation as the Nazis; that an increase in British armaments will merely aggravate the situation and eventually provoke war; and that Britain must leave no stone unturned in restoring equality to Germany and securing its return to the League. The opposition believes that Hitler is sincere in his professions of peace, and urges the British government to meet his demands by constructive measures—examination of Germany's territorial claims under Article XIX of the Covenant, and limitation of armaments at existing levels.³ It has not come to grips, however, with the problem of how and at whose expense Germany is to recover territory lost in 1919. The Liberal and Laborite opinion that Britain should make concessions to the Third Reich is shared by pro-Fascists like Viscount Rothermere, a prominent newspaper owner, and by extreme Tories who agree with Hitler that Germany is the strongest bulwark against communism.⁴

In practice the British government, dominated by Conservatives, has wavered between the two courses open to the country. First, under Sir John Simon's guidance, it attempted to play the rôle of mediator and to reconcile Germany with the rest of Europe by offering to substitute a "freely nego-

2. Great Britain, House of Commons, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 292, July 30, 1934, p. 2339.

3. Lord Lothian, "Germany and France," *The Times* (London), January 31 and February 1, 1935; "The Alternatives before Britain," *The Economist* (London), April 6, 1935, p. 773. Cf. also statements of Lord Dickinson and Lord Allen, both Labor peers, in the House of Lords on May 7, 1935. Great Britain, House of Lords, *Parliamentary Debates*, May 7, 1935, vol. 96, pp. 769, 787.

4. Frederick T. Birchall, "Anti-German Feeling Mounting in Britain," *New York Times*, May 12, 1935.

tiated" settlement for the peace dictated at Versailles. Then, after Germany had unilaterally repudiated the military clauses of the Versailles treaty, Britain, steered by Baldwin and Eden, joined France and Italy in formulating measures to prevent unilateral treaty repudiation or punish it after it had occurred. It has insisted, however, that such measures should be taken not through military alliances directed against Germany, but through the League of Nations, to which Germany can ultimately return. With characteristic aversion for clear-cut policies, Britain has not yet carried its efforts for collective security to their logical conclusion. It has urged negotiations with Germany, but has not offered to apply Article XIX of the Covenant, which might involve return to the Reich of the African mandates Britain and the Union of South Africa secured in 1920. It has stressed the need for collective security, yet has formulated an apparently isolationist armaments program which would enable it to fight Germany single-handed. Nor has Britain indicated what measures it will take against Germany should the latter resort to force to achieve its objectives in Austria and Eastern Europe. Today, as in 1914, British indecision and reluctance to accept treaty commitments may encourage Hitler to believe that Britain will stop short of military sanctions.

Yet Britain's policy, indecisive as it seems, has exercised a determining influence on that of France. French leaders and the French press have been profoundly divided regarding the European situation. One group, which unites M. Herriot, representing the Radical Socialists, with the extreme nationalist and militarist elements, is convinced that Germany will sooner or later resort to war; that it will strike the first blow either in Eastern Europe or Austria; that this war cannot fail to involve France; and that France must conclude pacts of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union and Italy which would automatically come into effect in case of German attack. Another group, represented by Foreign Minister Laval and the moderate organs of the press, believes that war is not inevitable; that there is still a chance to win Germany back to the concert of nations; that an automatic alliance with the Soviet Union would alienate Britain, thus playing into the hands of Hitler, and justify further German rearmament; that collaboration with Britain is France's greatest safeguard in peace as well as war; and that France should sign no agreements which might weaken this collaboration or conflict with its League of Nations and Locarno commitments.⁵

France's tendency to follow the British lead has

proved disquieting to the Soviet Union, which sincerely desires peace, but believes that the Nazi government has not abandoned Alfred Rosenberg's dreams of expansion into Soviet Ukraine;⁶ that war may prove inevitable; and that the most effective way of meeting the German threat is to forge a series of mutual assistance pacts which would demonstrate European solidarity against aggression. Fear of Nazi attack has made the Soviet Union more hostile to Germany than France—a development which in turn has disturbed moderate French opinion. The Soviet government, however, has finally acquiesced in M. Laval's cautious policy, and has agreed that the Franco-Soviet alliance should operate within the framework of the League, which it entered primarily to secure international support against aggression by Germany and Japan.

Soviet fears are shared by the Little Entente states—Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia—especially the former, more directly exposed to German attack than the U.S.S.R. No longer haunted by the bogey of Communist world revolution, the Little Entente states regard the Soviet Union as the true successor of Tsarist Russia and the bulwark of Slavdom against German expansion.⁷ They consequently place greater reliance on the Soviet Union than on their post-war ally, France, and have even brought pressure on the French government to increase its Soviet commitments.

The Little Entente, which fears Hungary's territorial aspirations even more than German expansion, has also been reassured by the radical change in Italy's foreign policy since the assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria. Mussolini, at first inclined to welcome Hitler as a recruit to the Fascist cause, completely dissociated Italy from Germany when it became apparent in 1934 that the Nazi leader had serious designs on Austria, where Italian influence has predominated during the past few years. Italy advocated strong measures to prevent German aggression in Austria, which would directly menace Italian control of the South Tyrol, inhabited by 250,000 Germans. In his struggle against Germany Mussolini rediscovered the League, which he had long derided; cultivated the friendship of France and the Little Entente, notably Yugoslavia; and warned Hungary that he would

5. Alfred Fabre-Luce, "La Prochaine Guerre," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 2, 1935, p. 195; *idem.*, "La Négociation Franco-Soviétique," *ibid.*, April 27, 1935, p. 387; Pierre Viénot, "1912-1935: Deux Alliances Russes," *ibid.*, February 9, 1935, p. 131.

6. Wertheimer, "Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy," cited.

7. Edouard Benes, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Address on Foreign Affairs before Chamber of Deputies and Senate, November 6, 1934, *Sources et Documents Tchécoslovaques*, No. 26 (Prague, "Orbis," 1934); "La Petite Entente et l'U.R.S.S.," *L'Europe Centrale*, June 16, 1934, p. 382.

no longer support its demands for territorial revision unless they are submitted within the framework of the League. Italy's colonial ambitions, however, have recently involved it in a protracted dispute with Ethiopia, which threatens not only to weaken its resistance to German aspirations in Austria, but to bring it into conflict with Britain and France.

The termination of Franco-Italian and Italo-Yugoslav rivalry has materially contributed to the stabilization of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. All small states, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, have continued to seek security against revision not by tamely following the great powers but by pooling their efforts in foreign affairs. The Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—which feel menaced by Germany's desire for eastern expansion, have formed a bloc modeled on the Little Entente and adopted a common foreign policy which may eventually link them to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. The Little Entente and the Balkan bloc, established in 1934 and comprising Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia, have cemented their relations and now act as one in foreign affairs. Even Bulgaria, which remains outside the Balkan bloc, cooperates with it through its friendship with Yugoslavia; while Albania, once used by Mussolini as a pawn in his diplomatic game against Belgrade, has been included in the scheme of Italo-Yugoslav collaboration.

The only countries in Eastern Europe which remain outside the anti-revision system are Poland and Hungary. Poland, which would have most to fear if Germany undertook territorial revision, believes that it has insured itself against loss of the Polish Corridor and Upper Silesia by the ten-year pact of non-aggression it concluded with Germany in January 1934.⁸ It is determined, moreover, to play the rôle of a great power, and to pursue an independent foreign policy, free from the influence of France, its post-war ally. Poland believes that, unless it preserves a balance between Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, it will become the battlefield of their ultimate conflict, which could only result in a new partition of Polish territory. It consequently strives to maintain friendly relations with France, Germany and the Soviet Union, avoiding both clashes and commitments.⁹ Since Hitler's announcement of German rearmament,

however, Poland has become apprehensive that friendship with Germany may lead to its own isolation, and leave it eventually at the mercy of the Third Reich.

The death on May 12 of Marshal Pilsudski, dictator of Poland since 1926, introduced an element of uncertainty into all calculations regarding Polish foreign aspirations. The old Marshal, who exercised a dominating influence over foreign affairs through his appointee, Colonel Beck, was actuated by hatred of Russia and communism, as well as by fear that France might seek to assure European peace by sacrificing the Polish Corridor to Germany. It is not impossible that in the long run a struggle for power may occur between the pro-German, pro-French and pro-Soviet cliques hitherto held under control by Marshal Pilsudski.

Unlike Poland, Hungary regards revision not as a threat but as a goal. The Goemboes government, which is reported to nurture pro-German sympathies, has not abandoned Hungary's territorial demands, but hope of realizing them in the near future has been seriously dimmed since January 1935, when Italy joined France in opposing revision by force.

FREEZING THE STATUS QUO

Alarmed by the growing isolation of the Reich in the spring of 1934, the Nazi government made a determined effort to win the friendship of Germany's neighbors. First it attempted to detach Yugoslavia from France's system of alliances. Captain Roehm, chief of staff of the Storm Troops, subsequently executed during the Nazi purge of June 30, visited Dalmatia in April ostensibly on a holiday, and on May 1 Yugoslavia concluded a commercial treaty with Germany, one of the principal outlets for its exports.¹⁰ Then on June 14-16, at Hitler's request, the German Chancellor conferred with Mussolini at Stra, near Venice. No formal agreement was reached, but it was understood that Hitler and Mussolini had decided to collaborate in achieving two objectives: preservation of Austria's independence and economic reconstruction of Central Europe. It was also reported that *Il Duce* had undertaken to bring Germany back into the League of Nations as soon as it had achieved arms equality.¹¹

While Hitler was seeking an understanding with Mussolini his special disarmament envoy, Joachim von Ribbentrop, visited Paris on June 16 and had a long talk with M. Barthou, French Foreign Min-

8. Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," cited.

9. Cf. speech of Colonel Beck, Polish Foreign Minister, in the League Council, April 16, 1935, League of Nations, Eighty-fifth (Extraordinary) Session of the Council, *Minutes*, P.V.2(1); also James Donnadieu, "Les Nouvelles Tendances de la Politique Extérieure Polonaise," *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, February 10, 1935, p. 295; Roger Massip, "Le Cas Polonais," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 30, 1935, p. 324.

10. Charles Loiseau, "Le Traité de Commerce Germano-Yugoslave," *L'Europe Centrale*, June 16, 1934, p. 386.

11. *Corriere della Sera*, June 15, 17, 1934.

ister. M. Barthou, alarmed by Mussolini's reception of Hitler, once more turned down German demands for rearmament, insisting that the Reich present them in Geneva. Undeterred by this cool reception or by the profound emotion which Hitler's purge of the Nazi party had evoked throughout Europe, Rudolf Hess, one of Hitler's closest advisers, appealed on July 8 to the French people and war veterans for cooperation to prevent a new war. Instead of glorifying force, he spoke of the horrors of modern warfare, but warned the world that if Germany were invaded "it would fight as bravely as any people ever fought for freedom."¹² This appeal met with favorable response on the part of the National and Federal Unions of Veterans in France, but failed to impress M. Barthou, who sought to obtain Britain's support for preservation of the *status quo* in Eastern Europe against possible German aggression.

THE EASTERN LOCARNO

The Franco-British negotiations which took place in London on July 8-10 were dominated by impressions of the Nazi purge, which had horrified British public opinion. M. Barthou apparently demanded no additional guarantees of the continental *status quo* from Britain; but he succeeded in winning British support for the Franco-Soviet scheme of interrelated regional pacts providing for territorial guarantees and mutual assistance against aggression. The first and most important of these was the so-called Eastern Locarno pact, intended to preserve the territorial *status quo* in Eastern Europe; it was to be signed by the Soviet Union, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states, and guaranteed by France. This pact, which imposed no obligations on Great Britain, was to have been complemented by a Mediterranean Locarno embracing Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. A third agreement, in the nature of a general act, would have established a connecting link between the Western, Eastern and Mediterranean Locarnos and placed all three under the aegis of the League of Nations, which Germany was expected to re-enter and the Soviet Union to join. This series of pacts represented one more attempt to freeze the European *status quo*, and failed to provide for peaceful territorial revision.¹³

In a speech delivered in the House of Commons on July 13, Sir John Simon revealed that the British government heartily endorsed M. Barthou's

proposal.¹⁴ This Franco-British harmony of views, although not embodied in any document, was greeted by the French as renewal of the *Entente Cordiale*. On July 12 Britain had already given practical evidence of its interest in the French project when the British ambassadors in Berlin, Rome and Warsaw delivered strong notes pressing for consummation of the Eastern Locarno.¹⁵ Britain's action provoked consternation in Germany, where it was felt that the British had given France a free hand in Europe.¹⁶ Apparently taken by surprise, Chancellor Hitler, who had been expected to discuss the Eastern Locarno in his Reichstag speech on July 13, omitted all reference to foreign policy. His hope that Italy might join Germany in opposing France's move was shattered on the same day, when Mussolini, in a government communiqué, followed the British lead by supporting the Eastern Locarno as the best method of insuring security and equality for Germany.¹⁷ The German press declared that the proposed pact would nail down once more "the oppressive dictate of Versailles," and that the Reich would be transformed into a "transit land" for French and Soviet armies.

The Nazi government did not answer the Eastern Locarno proposal until September 10, when it rejected it on the ground that peace in Eastern Europe could best be assured by bilateral treaties of non-aggression, and that Germany could not pledge mutual assistance to its neighbors in any and every conflict.¹⁸ These objections were echoed by Warsaw which, although accepting the Eastern Locarno "in principle," feared it would break up the German-Polish friendship formed early in 1934, and make Poland subservient to the anti-German aims of France and the U.S.S.R.

Poland's solidarity with Germany was further emphasized on September 13, when Colonel Beck, Polish Foreign Minister, declared in the League Assembly that, pending enactment of a general and uniform system for the protection of minorities, Poland refused to accept League supervision of the minorities treaty it had signed with the Allied and Associated powers in 1919.¹⁹ Poland had long ob-

14. For text of speech cf. Great Britain, House of Commons, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. 292, p. 692 *et seq.*, July 13, 1934; reprinted in *International Conciliation* (New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), No. 302, September 1934, p. 267. Cf. also Louis Joxe, "Retour de Londres," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, July 14, 1934, p. 698; "A New Locarno," *The Economist* (London), July 21, 1934, p. 102.

15. *New York Times*, July 13, 1934; *The Times* (London), July 14, 1934.

16. *New York Times*, July 12, 1934.

17. *Corriere della Sera*, July 14, 1934.

18. *New York Times*, September 11, 1934.

19. League of Nations, *Official Journal, Records of the Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Plenary Meetings*,

12. For text of this speech, cf. *Voelkischer Beobachter*, July 9, 1934.

13. For a report of the negotiations, cf. *The Times* (London), July 10, 11, 1934.

jected to minorities treaties on the ground that they created a humiliating inequality between the new states established in 1919 and the great powers which are not subject to similar obligations. Colonel Beck argued in the Assembly that the interests of minorities would be sufficiently protected by the fundamental laws of Poland. An ironic aspect of the situation was that Germany, which since the war had incessantly protested against alleged ill-treatment of the German minority in Poland, abandoned its complaints after January 1934, and did not object to Poland's action at Geneva. Colonel Beck's announcement, however, brought a sharp rebuke from Sir John Simon, M. Barthou and Baron Aloisi of Italy, who joined in declaring that no state can release itself from international obligations by unilateral action.

SOVIET ENTRANCE INTO THE LEAGUE

France and the Soviet Union had meanwhile multiplied their efforts to achieve an Eastern Locarno. An important step in that direction was taken on September 15, when after a week of feverish negotiations dominated by France the Soviet government was invited to become a member of the League of Nations. On the same day the League Council voted to give the Soviet Union a permanent seat, placing it on a basis of equality with Britain, France and Italy. On September 18, after some of the states opposed to Soviet entrance had voiced their feelings, the U.S.S.R. was officially admitted to the League Assembly.²⁰ The way was thus cleared for conclusion of an Eastern Locarno under the aegis of the League.

Another link in the Eastern Locarno system was forged in Geneva on September 12 when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which had organized a Baltic bloc in 1934,²¹ signed a ten-year treaty of understanding and cooperation modeled on the agree-

Text of the Debates (Geneva, 1934), p. 42-43. By this treaty Poland granted religious, linguistic and other rights to the minorities within its borders—Germans, Jews, Ruthenians, Ukrainians—constituting one-third of the population, and agreed that the stipulations of the treaty, which could not be modified without the assent of the League Council, should be placed under the guarantee of the League. At the January 1935 session of the League Council the Polish delegate absented himself while Poland's minorities treaty was under discussion. *New York Times*, January 19, 1935.

20. League of Nations, *Official Journal, Records of the Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, cited, p. 65-69; "The Conversion of Russia," *The Economist* (London), September 22, 1934, p. 521; Maurice Pernot, "Du Nouveau à l'Est," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, September 22, 1934, p. 939. Three countries—Holland, Portugal and Switzerland voted against entrance of the Soviet Union into the League, and seven—Argentina, Belgium, Cuba, Luxembourg, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela—refrained from voting.

21. Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," cited.

ments forming the Little Entente.²² The Baltic states agreed to hold biannual conferences and cooperate on all questions of foreign policy common to them. They recognized, however, "the existence of specific problems upon which it would be difficult to reach a concerted attitude," thus excepting the Memel and Vilna controversies from application of the treaty.

REVISION BY POLITICAL TERRORISM

EFFECTS OF DOLLFUSS' ASSASSINATION

Negotiations for the pacification of Central and Eastern Europe had meanwhile been completely eclipsed by the crisis precipitated on July 25, when a band of Austrian Nazis assassinated Chancellor Dollfuss.²³ Nazi terroristic activities directed from Germany, far from ceasing as Hitler had promised Mussolini at Stra, had steadily increased in violence and frequency, culminating in an abortive *Putsch* to overthrow the Dollfuss government. This *Putsch* produced a sharp reaction against Germany, whose interference in Austria had long been resented by the European powers. It was generally felt that the unbridled violence and brutality which Hitler had meted out to his own followers on June 30 had been transferred from the national to the international plane.²⁴

Premier Mussolini, who felt that Hitler had betrayed his Stra pledges, took drastic steps, with the full approval of France, to prevent seizure of power by the Austrian Nazis. Italian troops and airplanes were rushed to the border, and the Italian press openly accused Germany of complicity in the assassination of the Austrian Chancellor.²⁵ Yugoslavia, fearing that Mussolini would seize this opportunity to assume control of Vienna, also mobilized, and for a few days Austria threatened to become once more the cockpit of Europe.

Alarmed by this reaction, the Hitler government attempted at the eleventh hour to wash its hands of the Austrian situation, and announced that former Vice-Chancellor von Papen had been ap-

22. For text of this treaty, cf. Bank of Estonia, *Monthly Report on Economic and Banking Conditions*, vol. 5, No. 8-9, August-September, 1934, p. 31. For comments, cf. Michel Model, "Le Traité d'Entente et de Collaboration des Etats Baltes," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, September 22, 1934, p. 957.

23. Wertheimer, "Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy," cited.

24. "Unhappy Austria," *The Economist*, July 28, 1934, p. 151; "Gangster Politics in Europe," *ibid.*, August 4, 1934, p. 212. *The Times* (London) leading editorial on July 25 said: "The full story [of Dollfuss' assassination] is making the name of Nazi to stink in the nostrils of the world."

25. "Il Giudizio della Storia," *Corriere della Sera*, July 29, 1934.

pointed special Minister to Vienna with instructions to restore Austro-German friendship. This appointment, which contrary to diplomatic usage had been announced in Germany before being submitted to the Austrian government, was regarded by France and Italy as another maneuver to accomplish by diplomacy what the Nazis had failed to achieve by violence.

ITALO-GERMAN ESTRANGEMENT

Although Italo-German tension gradually relaxed after August first, the Dollfuss assassination created a profound breach between the two countries, and hastened the Franco-Italian rapprochement long desired by Barthou. At the same time Mussolini attempted to bolster Austria's resistance to Nazi ambitions by consolidating the Italo-Austro-Hungarian bloc formed in March 1934.²⁶ While Chancellor Schuschnigg, Dollfuss' successor, was visiting Premier Goemboes in Budapest on August 9 and 10, Prince von Starhemberg, Austrian Vice-Chancellor and leader of the *Heimwehr* forces supported by Italy, conferred with Mussolini in Rome on August 11. Starhemberg's visit prepared the way for that of Chancellor Schuschnigg, who met Mussolini in Florence on August 21, when the two statesmen agreed that Austria's independence presupposed complete internal autonomy, and was of "concrete interest" for all Europe. The presence in Italy during the Florence conversations of Empress Zita, mother of Archduke Otto, Hapsburg pretender to the Austrian throne, gave rise to rumors that Italy and Hungary might favor Hapsburg restoration as the method best calculated to preserve Austria's independence.²⁷

ANXIETY OF LITTLE ENTENTE

These rumors alarmed Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia, which oppose Hapsburg restoration more than Austro-German union, fearing that, once Otto is on the throne of either Austria or Hungary, he will seek to reconstitute the former Hapsburg empire at the expense of the Little Entente. These fears were sharpened by continued friction between Italy and Yugoslavia over Mussolini's aid to Austria. The Belgrade government contended that Italy encroached on Austria's independence no less than Germany, that an Austrian government resting on Italian bayonets was no more independent than one armed and financed by Nazi Germany, and that Italy's attempts to

dominate Vienna threatened the peace of Europe. Italy, in reply, accused Yugoslavia of fostering Nazi agitation in Austria, thereby assisting Germany, and of giving aid and comfort to Nazi exiles who had sought refuge on Yugoslav territory after the Dollfuss assassination.²⁸ This controversy, fomented by the press of both countries, reached an acute stage on September 19, when Rome lodged a strong protest against a semi-official Yugoslav newspaper which had virtually accused the Italian army of cowardice in the World War.

Fear that Yugoslavia might abandon its post-war alliance with France and adopt a pro-German, as well as anti-Italian, orientation was temporarily allayed on September 14, when the Little Entente states, meeting at Geneva, agreed on a program of foreign policy. They decided to approve the rapprochement of France and Italy, and urge the projected understanding between Italy and Yugoslavia. The Belgrade government, however, declined to support the plan proposed by Dr. Benes, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, who had tried to have Austria's independence guaranteed by neighboring states as well as the great powers, thus obviating action by Italy alone in case of another Nazi *Putsch*. The resolution finally adopted by the Little Entente stated that "the League of Nations seems in case of necessity the most appropriate guarantor of the maintenance of peace and order created by the treaties."²⁹

FRANCO-ITALIAN COLLABORATION ON AUSTRIA

In accordance with this view, France and Italy suggested that the League should guarantee Austria's independence. Great Britain, however, refused to undertake additional commitments on the continent, and on September 27 in Geneva the three powers merely reaffirmed their declaration of February 17, 1934 concerning the necessity of maintaining the independence and integrity of Austria in accordance with existing treaties.³⁰ They also renewed for another twelve months the permission granted Austria in February 1934 to maintain an additional force of 8,000 men for the reestablishment of internal law and order.³¹

Italy's collaboration with France in Central Europe alarmed Hungary, which feared that Mussolini might sacrifice treaty revision for the sake of a French alliance. The belief that Hungary could secure revision only by joining forces with Ger-

28. "Yugoslavia and Austria," *ibid.*

29. *New York Times*, September 15, 1934.

26. Cf. Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," cited.

27. "The Austrian Question again Current," *The Central European Observer*, September 7, 1934, p. 306.

30. Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," cited.

31. By the treaty of Saint-Germain the Austrian army was limited to 30,000 men recruited by voluntary enlistment.

many steadily gained ground in the fall of 1934. While Budapest sought Germany's support, Yugoslavia attempted to strengthen its position by a rapprochement with Bulgaria, Italy's former satellite in the Balkans. This rapprochement had been facilitated by the foreign policy of the Bulgarian Premier, M. Gueorguieff, who had come to power on May 19, 1934 following a military coup d'état. The Gueorguieff government relaxed Italy's grip on Bulgaria, established diplomatic relations with the Soviet government in July, and suppressed the terroristic Macedonian organization, *Imro*, whose activities had long envenomed relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.³² The two countries reached an understanding on September 27, when King Alexander and Queen Marie of Yugoslavia arrived in Sofia for a three-day visit with the Bulgarian sovereigns.³³ Although Bulgaria refused to join the Balkan pact signed on February 9, 1934 by Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia,³⁴ it agreed to adjust its differences with Yugoslavia over frontier and passport questions, which had created constant friction in the past.

THE MARSEILLES OUTRAGE

On returning from his goodwill visit to Sofia King Alexander proceeded to France, where he intended to discuss with M. Barthou the future of Franco-Yugoslav collaboration, as well as the possibility of reconciliation between Italy and Yugoslavia. On October 6 Premier Mussolini, speaking at Milan, extended the olive branch to Belgrade, declaring that the two countries were divided by no insoluble problems.³⁵ This Franco-Italian move to stabilize the situation in Southeastern Europe was dramatically interrupted on October 9 by the assassination of King Alexander, a few minutes after he had disembarked at Marseilles for a conference with M. Barthou, who also succumbed to the assassin's bullets.

The assassin was at first identified as a member of the Croat terrorist group, *Ustasha*, long suspected by Belgrade of receiving support from Italy and Hungary; subsequent investigation, however, appeared to show that he belonged to the Macedonian terrorist organization, *Imro*, which Bulgaria had striven to suppress.³⁶ Yugoslav suspicion

first focused on Italy, where a leading Croat terrorist, Dr. Anton Pavelitch, had his headquarters, and anti-Italian demonstrations occurred at Sarajevo and Ljubljana. Mussolini, however, refused to allow these demonstrations to develop into an international incident. While declining to extradite Pavelitch, he reiterated the offer of reconciliation he had made on October 6; and the Italian press, abandoning its attacks on Yugoslavia, joined Belgrade in mourning the murdered King.

Yugoslav hostility was diverted from Italy to Hungary on October 12, when it was revealed that two of the murderer's associates had confessed that they belonged to a group of Croat terrorists encamped at Janka Puszta in Hungary, where they had received instruction from Hungarian officers in the use of high-powered weapons. Yugoslavia had already protested against the existence of the Janka Puszta camp at a meeting of the League Council on June 5, 1934, alleging that Hungary encouraged the terroristic activities of Croat exiles.³⁷ At that time the dispute had been left to direct negotiations between the two countries, which reached an agreement in Belgrade on July 21. Hungary, however, had contended throughout that Croat terrorism was due, not to foreign intrigue, but to Croat dissatisfaction with Yugoslav rule.³⁸

Minimizing the internal problem of Croat dissatisfaction, the Belgrade authorities continued to insist that Alexander's assassination was due to foreign machinations. In identical communiqués published in Belgrade on October 19 the foreign ministers of Czechoslovakia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia—comprising the Little Entente and the Balkan bloc—declared that the Marseilles murder was a matter of international concern, since it had been caused by factors operating outside Yugoslavia's frontiers, but urged "calm, pacific and objective" cooperation by all states in establishing the real guilt for the crime and in preventing further terrorist outrages.³⁹ Yielding to pressure from the French government, which sought to prevent an Italo-Yugoslav incident, the Belgrade press refrained from attacking Italy, but multiplied its insinuations regarding Hungary. Alarmed by the pro-Italian policy of the Yugoslav Regency, headed by Prince Paul, Premier Goemboes attempted to find an ally in Poland, which he visited on October 19. The Hungarian

32. "The Yugoslav Foreign Minister at Sofia," *The Central European Observer*, May 18, 1934, p. 178.

33. Dr. J. Kopecky, "The International Position of Bulgaria," *ibid.*, October 5, 1934, p. 344.

34. Dean, "Toward a New Balance of Power in Europe," cited.

35. *Corriere della Sera*, October 7, 1934.

36. Dr. J. Kopecky, "The Macedonian Organization," *The Central European Observer*, December 14, 1934, p. 427.

37. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, June 1934 (Part II), p. 657, 682.

38. For discussion of Yugoslavia's internal situation, cf. Louis Adamic, *Return of the Native* (New York, Harper, 1934); *idem.*, "What Next in Jugoslavia?" *The Nation*, October 24, 1934; Hamilton Fish Armstrong, "After the Assassination of King Alexander," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1935, p. 204.

39. *New York Times*, October 20, 1934.

Premier, however, obtained nothing in Warsaw except relatively unimportant pacts on intellectual and trade cooperation.

YUGOSLAVIA'S APPEAL TO THE LEAGUE

A fresh crisis was precipitated on November 22, when Yugoslavia, backed by Czechoslovakia and Rumania, submitted a note to the League of Nations asserting that Hungary had connived in the activities of Croat terrorists culminating in the Marseilles outrage, and demanded League investigation of the crime. The Belgrade government appealed to the League Council to "restore confidence in international justice and morality," declaring that, if terrorism persisted, "an era of anarchy and international barbarism would overwhelm the civilized world, in which the most elementary foundations of international peace would inevitably disappear."⁴⁰ M. Laval, who had succeeded M. Barthou as French Foreign Minister, vainly attempted to sidetrack Yugoslavia's appeal, fearing it would endanger France's negotiations with Italy. All hope of pigeonholing the matter vanished on November 24, when the Hungarian delegate to the League, Tibor Eckhardt, demanded immediate investigation of Yugoslavia's charges, arguing that they constituted a threat to international peace.⁴¹

The Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute came before the League Council at an extraordinary session which opened on December 5. The tense situation created by Yugoslavia's appeal had been aggravated on the eve of the Council meeting, when the Belgrade government began the expulsion of 3,000 Hungarians on the ground that their labor permits had expired, and threatened to apply the same procedure to all Hungarians in Yugoslavia, totaling 27,500. These expulsions, which involved women, children and the aged and were in many cases brutally carried out with little or no warning, aroused Hungarian public opinion.

In the Council meeting of December 7 sharp words were exchanged by Dr. Benes, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, speaking for the Little Entente, and Tibor Eckhardt, the Hungarian dele-

gate. France, although siding with Belgrade, revealed that it would countenance no warlike moves against Hungary; and Italy, while supporting Hungary, argued that territorial revision should take place only by peaceful means.⁴² The intervention of Britain, which had been shocked by the Yugoslav expulsions, served to moderate the Belgrade authorities. Following the return of Prince Paul, the Yugoslav regent, from London, where he had attended Princess Marina's wedding, Belgrade announced on December 9 that the expulsions of Hungarians had been suspended.

THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION

At a night session held on December 10 the Council unanimously adopted a resolution drafted by Mr. Eden, British Lord Privy Seal, which was designed to salve Yugoslavia's feelings without injuring those of Hungary.⁴³ The Council condemned the assassination of King Alexander, "the Unifier," and insisted that "all those responsible should be punished." It declared that it is the duty of every state neither to encourage nor tolerate on its territory any terrorist activity having a political purpose, and to prevent and repress acts of terrorism. These duties, it pointed out, devolve particularly on League members, which have undertaken under the Covenant "to respect the territorial integrity and existing political independence" of other members. The Council reached the conclusion that "certain Hungarian authorities may have assumed, at any rate through negligence, certain responsibilities" in connection with the preparation of the Marseilles crime, but expressed its belief in the goodwill of the Hungarian government "to take at once punitive action in the case of any of its authorities whose culpability may have been established." Finally, arguing that rules of international law concerning the repression of terrorist activities are not at present sufficiently precise to guarantee international cooperation in this matter, the Council set up a committee of ten experts, including a Hungarian, to study the question and draft an international convention.

The Council resolution made no attempt to solve the problem created by the presence of large Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia whose return is sought by the mother country. It succeeded, however, in relaxing dangerous tension between Hungary and the Little Entente. A dispute which had threatened to develop into another Sarajevo was peacefully adjudged by the principal European powers through

40. League of Nations, *Official Journal, Minutes of the Eighty-Third (Extraordinary) Session of the Council, Geneva, December 5 to 11, 1934, December 1934 (Part II)*, p. 1765. The Yugoslav case was set forth in *Communication from the Yugoslav Government to the Council of the League of Nations with reference to the Responsibility of the Hungarian Authorities in Connection with Terroristic Activities directed against Yugoslavia, ibid.*, p. 1772.

41. Letter from Hungarian government to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, *ibid.*, p. 1768. For statement of Hungarian case, cf. *Memorandum submitted on behalf of the Royal Hungarian Government in reply to the Yugoslav Government's request to the Council of the League of Nations with reference to the Marseilles outrage, ibid.*, p. 1829.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 1712 et seq.

43. For text of resolution, cf. *ibid.*, p. 1759.

resort to League machinery. On January 18, 1935 Hungary submitted to the League Council a voluminous report of its investigation, in which it reached the conclusion that it was impossible to establish any connection, direct or indirect, between the Hungarian government or authorities and the Marseilles assassinations, but admitted that some minor officials, who had since been disciplined, had not "kept as close an eye on Croatian emigrants as was desirable and necessary."⁴⁴ This report was accepted by Yugoslavia, at the May session of the League Council, when the incident was officially closed.

Appeasement in Southeastern Europe was paralleled in the West by Franco-German agreement on various thorny questions concerning the Saar plebiscite, and by the creation of an international force for policing the Saar.⁴⁵ The conciliatory spirit which marked these negotiations caused some anxiety in Moscow, where it was feared that M. Laval, who had always favored direct understanding with Germany, might substitute a bilateral Franco-German pact for the proposed Eastern Locarno. To prevent such a development, M. Litvinov and M. Laval signed a protocol on December 5, in which the two countries declared that they would undertake no negotiations for the conclusion of political accords which might compromise realization of the Eastern Locarno pact.⁴⁶

TOWARD A NEW DEAL IN EUROPE

THE ROME ACCORD

Peaceful settlement of the Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute and the Saar problem, each of which, if unskillfully handled, might have provoked an international conflict, encouraged France, Italy and Britain to launch a new deal in European politics. This new deal, which was to assure equality to Germany provided it agreed to do its share in strengthening collective security, received its first expression in the Rome accord of January 7 and the Franco-British communiqué of February 3.

The Franco-Italian rapprochement which had been gradually materializing since Dollfuss' assassination culminated in an accord during the week-end of January 5, which M. Laval spent in Rome—

the first time that a French Foreign Minister had visited Fascist Italy. This week-end not only removed the bitterness which had characterized Franco-Italian relations since 1919, but demonstrated the extent to which fear of Nazi aggression in Austria had transformed Italy's attitude toward France.

The Rome accord, signed by Premier Mussolini and M. Laval on January 7, consisted of six documents by which, in return for Italian concessions in Central and Eastern Europe, France met Italy's principal demands in Africa.⁴⁷ In a procès-verbal dealing with Central European questions, France and Italy declared their intention to consult each other, as well as Austria, in the event of a new threat to Austrian independence, and to communicate with other interested states. They thus served notice on Hitler that a Nazi *Putsch* against Austria would encounter Franco-Italian opposition, and at the same time reassured the Little Entente states—especially Yugoslavia—which had feared after the July events that Italy might seek to establish a protectorate over Vienna. France and Italy also agreed on the necessity of a multilateral understanding in which Austria and its neighbors—Germany, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia—would undertake to respect their mutual frontiers and not interfere in each other's internal affairs. This understanding was to be open to adherence by France, Poland and Rumania.

Italy's determination to join France in opposing unilateral treaty revision was expressed in another convention stating that, in the light of the five-power declaration of December 1932—which recognized Germany's right to equality within a system of security—Italy and France would consider German rearmament illegal as long as the Reich had not reached a special agreement on that subject with the other signatories of the declaration.

The pledges made by Italy in Europe were balanced by French concessions in Africa. As a result of the Laval-Mussolini negotiations, which definitely liquidated all colonial questions left pending by the London treaty of 1915,⁴⁸ France ceded to Italy a region of 44,500 square miles bordering on the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and a strip of French Somaliland which provided Italy with an outlet

44. Communication from the Royal Hungarian government to the Council of the League of Nations concerning the Marseilles Outrage, League of Nations, *Official Journal, Minutes of the Eighty-Fourth Session of the Council, January 11-21, 1935* (Geneva, February 1935), p. 278.

45. John C. deWilde, "The Future of the Saar," *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 2, 1935.

46. *New York Times*, December 6, 1934.

47. For official Italian summary of the Rome agreements, cf. *Corriere della Sera*, January 9, 1935; also supplement to *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 2, 1935, p. III. For official French summary, cf. *L'Europe Nouvelle* supplement, cited, p. IV. There are some important differences in wording between the Italian and French summaries. The Rome agreements were ratified by the French Chamber of Deputies on March 22 by a vote of 555 to 9. *Le Temps*, March 23, 1935.

48. Cf. Vera Micheles Dean, "France and Italy in the Mediterranean," *Foreign Policy Association Information Service*, March 19, 1930.

on the Gulf of Aden; France also recognized Italy's sovereignty over the island of Doumerrah in the Red Sea. The French, moreover, gave Italy a share in the ownership and management of the French railway which connects Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, with Jibuti, a port in French Somaliland, thus enabling the Italian government to exercise a measure of control over shipments of arms and ammunition to Ethiopia and combat Japan's trade encroachments in that region, which have alarmed Italy. The meagerness of Italy's territorial gains under the Rome accord as compared with its 1919 demands gave rise to reports that France, in addition, had granted Italy a free hand in Ethiopia. These reports received apparent confirmation on February 10, when Mussolini embarked on a far-flung campaign against Ethiopia, which evoked no protests from France, Britain or the League of Nations.⁴⁹

Another thorny question on which agreement was reached in Rome was the status of the 100,000 Italians residing in the French colony of Tunis, whose allegiance Italy desires to retain.⁵⁰ The Franco-Italian consular convention of 1896 had provided that these Italians were to "be received and treated . . . on the same basis and in the same manner as nationals and French citizens." In 1919 France denounced this convention, which had since been subject to renewal every three months, leaving the status of Tunisian Italians in a precarious condition. Italy had contended that the French authorities discriminated against Italians and forced them, directly or indirectly, to surrender their allegiance and accept French naturalization. The Rome protocol regarding Tunis extended for another thirty years most of the privileges granted Italians by the 1896 agreement. All Italians born in Tunis of Italian parents between 1945 and 1965 will retain Italian nationality, but will have the right to opt for French nationality on reaching their majority; those born after 1965 will lose Italian nationality. With respect to Italian schools in Tunis, the protocol stipulated that they shall be maintained until March 1955, when they will be transformed into private Italian schools subject to local French scholastic legislation. Italians who before 1945 had been admitted to the liberal professions shall preserve this right during their lifetime.

The far-reaching accord concluded by France

49. "Italy Mobilizes against Abyssinia," *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, Vol. XIV, No. 17, February 22, 1935; Robert G. Woolbert, "Italy in Abyssinia," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1935, p. 499; "Italy and Ethiopia: the Rome Pact," *The Times* (London), May 15, 1935. Italy's conflict with Ethiopia will be discussed in a forthcoming issue of *Foreign Policy Reports*.

50. Dean, "France and Italy in the Mediterranean," cited.

and Italy was hailed in both countries as a major contribution to European peace.⁵¹ At a meeting held in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, on January 11, the three Little Entente states welcomed the Rome agreements, especially that concerning Austria, and expressed readiness to collaborate with France and Italy, provided Hungary did not seize this opportunity to demand territorial revision as the price of its participation in the proposed Central European understanding.⁵² While Franco-Italian reconciliation dealt a severe blow to Hungary's revisionist aspirations, the Goemboes government did not openly challenge the Rome accord. Hungary made it clear that territorial revision would remain its goal in foreign affairs, but that it would seek to achieve this goal only by peaceful means, and would not interfere in the internal affairs of other states.⁵³ Count Bethlen, a determined advocate of revision with pro-Italian sympathies, declared that, provided Hungary were not asked to surrender its revisionist hopes and obtained improvement in the position of Hungarian minorities abroad, it was ready to collaborate with the Little Entente as proposed by France and Italy.⁵⁴

The change in atmosphere produced by the Rome accord was emphasized on March 20, when the new Italian Minister to Belgrade, Count Guido Viola, presented his credentials to Prince Paul, and at Mussolini's express instructions made a speech so friendly and conciliatory in character as to mark a revolution in Italo-Yugoslav relations since the war.⁵⁵

FRANCO-BRITISH COMMUNIQUE OF FEBRUARY 3

Franco-Italian agreement on the major issues of European politics paved the way for a more ambitious effort by France and Britain to start fresh negotiations with the Reich, not as between victors and vanquished, but as between equals. Following a week-end of negotiations in London, the French

51. Pierre Brossolette, "Les Accords de Rome," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, January 12, 1935, p. 35; "Un Buon Accordo," *Corriere della Sera*, January 9, 1935. Cf. also George Glasgow, "The Rome Pact," *The Contemporary Review*, February 1935, p. 137.

52. "Central Europe after the Rome Negotiations," *The Central European Observer*, January 25, 1935, p. 19; "La Petite-Entente et l'Accord Franco-Italien," *Le Temps*, January 13, 1935.

53. Speech of Premier Goemboes, March 25, 1935, *Budapesti Hirlap*, March 27, 1935; George Ottlik, "La Situation de la Hongrie au Début de 1935," *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, February 1935, p. 103.

54. Count Stephen Bethlen, "New Possibilities in the Valley of the Danube," *Pesti Napló* (Budapest), February 2, 1935; cf. also Georges Marot, "La Hongrie et l'Entente Franco-Italienne," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, January 19, 1935, p. 67.

55. Rudolf Prochazka, "Une Nouvelle Atmosphère Italo-Yugoslave," *L'Europe Centrale*, March 23, 1935, p. 181; "Italy and Yugoslavia," *The Economist* (London), April 27, 1935, p. 946.

and British Premiers and Foreign Ministers issued a communiqué on February 3, embodying the main outlines of the new deal they proposed for Europe.⁵⁶ In this communiqué Britain heartily approved the Franco-Italian agreement of January 7 regarding Central Europe, and made it clear that it considered itself one of the powers which, according to that agreement, will consult together "if the independence or integrity of Austria is menaced." With respect to the question of Germany's rearmament in violation of the Versailles treaty, the communiqué administered a rebuke to the Reich by stating that "neither Germany nor any other power whose armaments have been defined by the peace treaties is entitled by unilateral action to modify these obligations." Britain and France, however, displayed a new, if belated, realism by waiving the letter of the treaties, and declaring that "nothing could contribute more to the restoration of confidence and to the restoration of peace among nations than a general settlement freely negotiated between Germany and the other powers."

This general settlement, according to the communiqué, envisaged conclusion of the Eastern Locarno treaty and the pact of mutual guarantee and non-interference advocated by France and Italy for Central Europe. Most important of all, this settlement—in conformity with the five-power declaration of December 11, 1932 regarding equality of rights in a system of security—contemplated armaments agreements which, in the case of Germany, were to have supplanted Part V of the Versailles treaty limiting the arms and armed forces of the Reich. Germany's return to the League of Nations "with a view to active membership" was also to form a part of the general settlement.

The French and British Ministers, moreover, declared that they had been "impressed by the special danger to peace created by modern developments in the air." To avert these dangers, they proposed the conclusion of reciprocal regional agreements in which the signatories would undertake to give immediate aerial assistance to any one of their number which might be the victim of "unprovoked aerial aggression" by one of the contracting parties. Such an air agreement in Western

Europe, to be concluded by the signatories of the Locarno treaty of 1925—Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Italy—would, according to the communiqué, "go far to operate as a deterrent to aggression and to insure immunity from sudden attacks from the air."

The proposed air pact imposed no fresh obligations on Britain, which together with Italy had guaranteed the Franco-German and Belgian-German frontiers under the Locarno treaty. It merely defined Britain's Locarno obligations with a greater degree of precision.⁵⁷ The real significance of the air pact was the emphasis it laid on the altered character of Franco-British relations. For the first time in its history Britain acknowledged that it needs France's aid against aggression from the air as much as France needs that of Britain on land and sea. This acknowledgment, in French opinion, represents a major gain for French security, and should facilitate the exchange of views between the general staffs of the two countries.⁵⁸

The Franco-British communiqué implicitly recognized Germany's right to participate in European affairs on a basis of equality, as well as its right to possess an air force. At the same time the British agreed with the French that security against German attack in the West would prove meaningless if it merely gave the Reich a free hand in Austria and Eastern Europe, and that European security must be strengthened not piecemeal but as a whole. By accepting Hitler's professions of peace at face value, the communiqué placed squarely on the German Chancellor the responsibility for relieving Europe of the widespread anxiety created by the desire of the Nazis for territorial expansion, and asked for a constructive answer from Germany. It also notified the Reich that Franco-British collaboration was not an isolated act of diplomacy. The final sentence of the communiqué declared that the two countries were ready "to resume their consultations without delay after having received the replies of the other interested powers."

Chancellor Hitler's reply to the Franco-British proposals was communicated orally to the French and British Ambassadors in Berlin on February 14.⁵⁹ The Reich, declaring that its position was "geographically especially exposed," welcomed the suggestion of an air pact and was "ready in principle to employ its air forces as a means of de-

56. Great Britain, *Joint Communiqué issued on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the French Republic as a result of the Conversations between the French and British Ministers in London, February 1st to 3rd, 1935*. Miscellaneous No. 1 (1935), Cmd. 4798, London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1935. For comments, cf. "A New Start in Europe," *The Economist*, February 9, 1935, p. 297; "A Constructive Agreement," *The Times* (London), February 4, 1935; "La Déclaration Commune de Londres," *Le Temps* (Paris), February 5, 1935; Alfred Fabre-Luce, "L'Accord de Londres," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, February 9, 1935.

57. "Ce que la Grande-Bretagne a promis à la France." *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 30, 1935, p. 303. The signatories of the Locarno treaty undertook to give immediate assistance to any one of their number which might be the victim of unprovoked aggression by one of the contracting parties.

58. *Ibid.*

59. For text, cf. *New York Times*, February 16, 1935.

terrifying disturbances of the peace." The existence of a German military air force—categorically prohibited by the Versailles treaty—was thus openly admitted in Berlin. At the same time, the German government took this opportunity to state that the danger of an armaments race "has arisen from the abandonment by the heavily armed states of disarmament as prescribed by the treaties."

Although the German reply was conciliatory in tone, it completely ignored the question of German adherence to the Eastern Locarno and Central European pacts which formed an integral part of the London communiqué. The Nazi government, moreover, suggested direct Anglo-German discussion of the whole problem, in preference to international negotiations, thus seeking to drive a wedge between France and Britain. By this move Germany recaptured the initiative in diplomatic maneuvers previously enjoyed by Italy, Britain and France.

Italy had meanwhile declared on February 9 that, while it adhered in principle to the proposed Western air pact, its geographic position would make Anglo-Italian air collaboration extremely difficult. Belgium accepted the Franco-British communiqué in its entirety on February 12; and on February 20 the Soviet government, consulted by the French, welcomed the London proposals which, in its opinion, recognized the impossibility of localizing war as well as the necessity of rendering immediate assistance to a country victim of aggression. It insisted, however, that security could be attained only by conclusion of all pacts mentioned in the Franco-British communiqué, and that "to forget this or that accord"—as had been done by Germany—might encourage treaty violations.⁶⁰ Germany's failure to mention the Eastern Locarno in its reply to the February 3 communiqué alarmed the Soviet Union, which feared that, in return for a Western air pact, Britain might give the Reich a free hand in Eastern Europe.⁶¹

The British cabinet, at first inclined to insist that Germany should discuss the Franco-British communiqué as a whole through ordinary diplomatic channels, finally agreed that Sir John Simon should visit Berlin, after it had been informed on February 22 that Germany was ready to examine all points of the London proposals.⁶² On February 25 Sir John Simon announced in the House of Commons that, with France's approval, he would

go to Berlin on March 7. This announcement aroused high hopes in Germany, where it was welcomed as the dawn of a new era in European relations.

THE BREAKDOWN OF COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS

THE BRITISH WHITE PAPER

On March 5, however, the Nazi government abruptly postponed the Simon visit on the ground that Chancellor Hitler had contracted a cold during the festivities celebrating return of the Saar to Germany. This postponement followed the publication on March 4 of a British White Paper, issued in connection with a debate on imperial defense scheduled to take place in the House of Commons on March 11.⁶³ In this White Paper the government declared that British public opinion had tended in the past to assume "that nothing is required for the maintenance of peace except the existing international political machinery, and that the older methods of defense—navies, armies and air forces—on which we have hitherto depended for our security in the last resort are no longer required"; but "the force of world events" had demonstrated that existing peace machinery "cannot be relied upon as a protection against an aggressor." While the government believed in the ultimate triumph of peaceful methods, it could no longer close its eyes to the fact that "adequate defenses are still required for security and to enable the British Empire to play its full part in maintaining the peace of the world." The White Paper reiterated that Britain is particularly afraid of an attack from the air, and for this reason "the importance of the integrity of certain territories on the other side of the Channel and the North Sea [Belgium, France and the Netherlands] looms larger than ever." It pointedly stated that German rearmament, "if continued at the present rate, unabated and uncontrolled, will aggravate the existing anxieties of Germany's neighbors and may consequently produce a situation where peace will be imperiled." Under the circumstances, Britain was forced to increase its army, navy and air forces "to preserve peace, to maintain security and to deter aggression."

While the White Paper contained nothing that had not previously been said by British Ministers in the House of Commons, and had ostensibly been drafted with no reference to Sir John Simon's

60. For text of Soviet note, cf. *New York Times*, February 20, 1935; *Izvestia*, February 21, 1935.

61. "Sovetskoe Pravitelstvo i Anglo-Franzuskoe Soglashenie" (The Soviet Government and the Anglo-French Agreement), *Izvestia*, February 21, 1935.

62. *New York Times*, February 23, 1935.

63. Great Britain, *Statement Relating to Defence Issued in Connection with the House of Commons Debate on March 11, 1935*, Cmd. 4827 (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1935).

Berlin visit, it was regarded as a first-class diplomatic blunder in British Liberal and Labor circles,⁶⁴ and produced an explosion in the Reich. The Nazi government and press viewed its indictment of German rearmament and militarism as a direct contradiction of the February 3 communiqué, which had implicitly recognized Germany's right to arms equality, and as one more attempt to place on the Nazi government the entire onus for European tension. Britain's decision on March 7 to send Mr. Eden to Moscow, Warsaw and Prague, however, brought reports from Berlin that Hitler's health would soon permit a visit from the British Foreign Secretary, and on March 9 the Nazi government renewed its invitation to Sir John Simon. But no date was fixed as the German Chancellor, who had long been rumored to be suffering from a throat ailment, retired to Bavaria for a brief cure.

GERMANY'S REARMAMENT A FAIT ACCOMPLI

On March 16, before Sir John Simon had had an opportunity to visit Berlin, Chancellor Hitler made a spectacular reply to the British White Paper in an appeal to the German people, in which he announced that the Reich had decided to restore military conscription. The Nazi government, which on March 11 had already proclaimed the existence of a German air force, now declared that the German peace-time army, to be recruited by universal service, would consist of thirty-six divisions, probably totaling 550,000 men, as compared with Germany's pre-war army of 870,000.⁶⁶ These two announcements constituted unilateral denunciation by Germany of the principal military clauses of the Versailles treaty.

Germany's action, which foreshadowed the complete breakdown of the peace treaties, confronted the former Allies with three main alternatives. They might have launched a preventive war, striking at Germany while it was as yet unprepared for a major conflict; this alternative, however, was excluded from the start—neither the French nor the British people would have supported preventive war. They might have cemented the various alliances which had been taking shape in Europe since Hitler came to power, hermetically isolating Germany—and risked provoking the Germans to embark on a war of self-defense. Or, after registering a formal protest, the Allies might have pursued negotiations for a general agreement stabiliz-

ing the European situation, in the hope that Germany, now that it was armed, would collaborate for the maintenance of peace.

While France, Italy and the Soviet Union favored the second alternative, and hastened their negotiations for regional pacts of non-aggression and mutual assistance, Britain decided to adopt the third as the only one offering the slightest hope of peace. In a note of March 18 Britain registered a mild protest against Germany's action which, it said, was "calculated seriously to increase the uneasiness of Europe." It emphasized that the February 3 communiqué had envisaged a general settlement freely negotiated between Germany and other powers, and that such a settlement "cannot be facilitated by putting forward as a decision already arrived at strengths for military effectives greatly exceeding any before suggested."⁶⁷ In conclusion the British government stated that it had not abandoned plans for Sir John Simon's visit to Berlin, but desired to learn whether Germany still intended to give this visit its original scope and purpose.⁶⁸

The mildness of the British protest aroused consternation in Paris and Rome, where it was regarded as a betrayal of the united front established by the Rome accord and the Franco-British communiqué. On March 21 the French and Italian ambassadors in Berlin presented strong notes of protest to the German Foreign Minister, Baron von Neurath. After reviewing the historical background and pointing out that "no power can denounce the engagement of a treaty or modify its stipulations except with the agreement of the contracting parties," the French note declared that the Reich had "deliberately taken the most effective measures" to compromise the international negotiations in progress, and that France could therefore "only place on the German government responsibility for the state of uneasiness thus created in the world and the consequences which can result from it."⁶⁹ The Italian note was equally critical, and stressed that Italy had always advocated revision of the military clauses of the Versailles treaty.⁷⁰ In reply, Baron von Neurath orally informed the two Ambassadors that Germany regarded the "legal case" of rearmament as closed, since the other signatories of the Versailles treaty had failed to disarm.

64. "A Black Paper," *The Economist* (London), March 9, 1935, p. 515; "Policy and Armaments," *The New Statesman and Nation*, March 16, 1935, p. 371.

66. For detailed discussion of Hitler's appeal, cf. Wertheimer, "Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy," cited.

67. For text of British note, cf. *New York Times*, March 19, 1935.

68. Pierre Brossolette, "La Mission de Sir John Simon et de M. Eden à Berlin," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 23, 1935, p. 271.

69. For text of the French note, cf. *New York Times*, March 22, 1935.

70. *Corriere della Sera*, March 22, 1935.

The French and Italians, however, did not limit themselves to protests in Berlin. Simultaneously with the delivery of the French note in the Wilhelmstrasse, the French Foreign Office dispatched a note to Geneva calling attention to the fact that Germany, whose withdrawal from the League of Nations does not become final until October 21, 1935, had deliberately repudiated its treaty obligations in violation of the League Covenant. Basing its request on Article XI, paragraph 2, of the Covenant—on the ground that Germany's action threatened international peace—France asked for an extraordinary session of the Council to examine the situation. By this move France apparently hoped to forestall the possibility of a separate agreement between Sir John Simon and Hitler. On March 22, moreover, Italy recalled 250,000 young men to the colors, and France reinforced the troops on its eastern frontier.

To conciliate France and Italy and preserve the outward appearance of Allied unity, the British government sent Mr. Eden to Paris on March 23 for a conference with M. Laval and Signor Suvich, Italian Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. As a result of the Paris negotiations, it was agreed that Sir John Simon's visit to Berlin would be purely exploratory in character; that Simon and Eden would report to France and Italy at Stresa on April 11 concerning their visit to Berlin and Eden's subsequent trip to Moscow, Warsaw and Prague; and that the extraordinary session of the League Council would be postponed until April 15, after the Stresa meeting.

THE SIMON-HITLER COLLOQUY

While a complete official version of the Berlin conversations between Sir John Simon and Chancellor Hitler on March 25-26 is still lacking, Hitler apparently assured the British Foreign Secretary that his aim was to secure and strengthen European peace by promoting international cooperation. But, "when he came to discuss particular German aims with a frankness which his visitors appreciated, they seemed to be such as could be obtained only by an independent foreign policy."⁷¹ Hitler's demands,⁷² long familiar to students of his *Mein Kampf*, apparently came as a shock to Sir John Simon. In a brief statement to the House of Commons on March 28, the British Foreign Secretary revealed that "a considerable divergence of opinion between the two governments had developed in the course of the British con-

versations." He gave no intimation whether Britain, having learned the full extent of Germany's ambitions, would openly join the other European powers in opposing German aggression, or would explore the possibility of conciliating Hitler by territorial concessions in Europe or the colonies. It was only reported that Britain would invite Germany to a conference of naval powers in 1935.

PREPARATIONS AGAINST AGGRESSION

The Simon-Hitler colloquy, however, marked a turning point in British foreign policy. After Berlin Britain continued to avoid continental commitments and persisted in playing the rôle of mediator; but it rapidly tended to accept the Franco-Soviet-Italian thesis that, if Germany refused to participate in a collective system of security, such a system would have to be developed without and, if need be, against Germany. Hitler's warnings of the Communist danger, designed to win the support of British Tories for the Reich, did not prevent Mr. Eden from reaching an understanding with Stalin, Premier Molotov and Foreign Commissar Litvinov on his visit to Moscow March 30 and 31. M. Litvinov stressed the Soviet view that Nazi Germany is a threat to peace, that European peace is indivisible, and that German aggression in the East would inevitably provoke a general conflict. Mr. Eden, in return, apparently succeeded in assuring the Soviet government that, while Britain is reluctant to undertake clear-cut commitments, it would not oppose Soviet efforts to create an Eastern Locarno within the framework of the League of Nations. The joint communiqué issued in Moscow on March 31 emphasized that the Eastern Locarno pact was aimed not at the isolation or encirclement of any state, but at the establishment of equal security for all participants, including Poland and Germany.⁷³

A far more difficult task awaited Mr. Eden in Warsaw, which he visited on April 2 and 3. His conversations with Marshal Pilsudski and the Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, showed that Poland was anxious to maintain a balance between Germany and the Soviet Union, and feared that its adherence to the Eastern Locarno pact would be regarded in Berlin as an anti-German move. While public opinion in Poland had swung to the view that isolation from the rest of Europe was

71. *The Times* (London), March 28, 1935.

72. For summary of these demands, cf. Wertheimer, "Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy," cited.

73. For text of communiqué, cf. *New York Times*, April 1, 1935; *Izvestia*, April 1, 1935. Cf. "Anglo-Sovetskie Otnosheniya i Ukreplenie Diela Mira" (Anglo-Soviet Relations and the Strengthening of Peace), *Izvestia*, April 1, 1935; "From Moscow to Warsaw," *The Times* (London), April 2, 1935; Paul Drailmière, "M. Eden à Moscou," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, April 6, 1935, p. 321.

too high a price to pay for Germany's friendship, the government hesitated to burn its bridges unless it received assurance that Britain would actively defend the *status quo* in Eastern Europe against the Third Reich.⁷⁴

THE STRESA CONFERENCE

Ill health prevented Mr. Eden from reporting on his Eastern tour at the Stresa conference on April 11, at which the Premiers and Foreign Ministers of Britain, France and Italy learned from Sir John Simon the results of British "exploratory" talks. While the three powers showed readiness to continue negotiations with Germany, they noticeably strengthened their united front, and indicated that they would jointly oppose unilateral treaty repudiation. Guided by Britain, which continued to counsel moderation, the conference avoided both recrimination and clear-cut commitments. Italy, which on the eve of Stresa had denounced Germany, abandoned its threatening attitude. France was dissuaded from transforming its projected memorandum to the League into an ultimatum to the Reich. Germany's announcement on April 13 that, while it could only sign a non-aggression pact in Eastern Europe, it would not oppose mutual assistance pacts by other powers, was welcomed as a hopeful development. But no attempt was apparently made to avert a possible conflict by satisfying the territorial, military or economic aspirations of the Nazis.

The Stresa communiqué of April 14,⁷⁵ distinguished by masterly circumlocution, stated that Britain, France and Italy were agreed on a common line of conduct to be pursued during discussion of the French memorandum to the League. The three powers declared that information they had received—Germany's announcement concerning the Eastern Locarno—confirmed their belief that negotiations should be conducted for the development of security in Eastern Europe. They examined afresh the Austrian situation, only to reiterate their previous declarations on the subject. They recommended, however, that representatives of Austria's neighbors—including Germany and Hungary—should discuss the conclusion of a Central European accord as proposed by France and Italy on January 7. They expressed "regret" concerning Germany's rearmament and its effects on disarmament in general, but said they remained

anxious to "join every practicable effort for promoting international agreement on limitation of armaments." At the same time they agreed, in collaboration with the Little Entente countries, to examine the request which Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria had made after March 16 for revision of the military clauses of the peace treaties.

The three powers also decided "to continue actively" the study of regional air pacts, first proposed in the Franco-British communiqué of February 3. In a separate declaration Britain and Italy, guarantors of the Locarno treaty, once more reaffirmed their obligations in the West and announced their intention to fulfill them in case of need. This declaration anticipated the possibility that the Hitler government might attempt to terminate demilitarization of the Rhineland contrary to Germany's Locarno undertakings. Finally, the three powers declared that the object of their policy is collective maintenance of peace within the framework of the League, and that they are agreed in opposing, "by all practicable means," any unilateral repudiation of treaties which may endanger the peace of Europe.

THE LEAGUE'S REBUKE TO HITLER

The "practicable means" which the League should use to prevent aggression or punish it after it has occurred were discussed by the League Council which met in extraordinary session on April 15 to consider a French memorandum dated April 9.⁷⁶ In this memorandum France pointed out that Germany, by unilateral action, had "informally repudiated" the principal military clauses of the Versailles treaty, and had substituted "a method of *fait accompli*" for that of diplomatic negotiations. Should unilateral denunciation of international agreements become general, said the French government, there would be no room for any policy save that of force. France raised the further question whether efforts to build up a system of collective security through pacts of non-aggression, consultation and mutual assistance are worth while, "if it is to be agreed that the repudiation of contractual undertakings, however solemnly entered into, involves no consequences other than that of moral reprobation." According to France, "it is the duty of the Council to meet the threat to international order by considering the most suitable methods for remedying the situation that has now been created and for preventing its recurrence."

The determination of the Stresa powers to con-

74. *The Times* (London), April 3 and 4, 1935; "The British Role" (editorial), *ibid.*, April 4, 1935; Roger Massip, "Le Cas Polonais," cited.

75. For text, cf. *New York Times*, April 15, 1935; "Sound Sense at Stresa," *The Times* (London), April 13, 1935; "From Stresa to Geneva," *The Economist* (London), April 20, 1935, p. 892.

76. For text of French memorandum, cf. League of Nations, *Request of the French Government*, C.160.M.87.1935.VII. (Geneva), April 14, 1935.

vey, through the League Council, their disapproval of Germany's unilateral treaty repudiation was demonstrated by their action on the French memorandum. When every one of the so-called neutral members of the Council refused to act as rapporteur for fear of antagonizing Berlin, Britain, France and Italy introduced a resolution condemning Germany's rearmament in violation of the Versailles treaty. This resolution was unanimously adopted by the Council on April 16, with the sole abstention of Denmark, which feared German retaliation in Schleswig-Holstein.⁷⁷ Poland, which at first had indicated it would abstain from voting, decided at the last moment to vote for the resolution, apparently yielding to British and French persuasion.

The Council resolution⁷⁸ reaffirmed the fundamental principle of scrupulous respect for treaty obligations as an essential condition for the maintenance of peace, and stated that such obligations can be modified only with the consent of all contracting parties. After condemning German rearmament as a threat to peace and declaring it invalid—although already a *fait accompli*—the resolution reminded Germany that its action was inconsistent with the plan for freely negotiated European security outlined in the February 3 communiqué. The Council, however, invited Germany to continue negotiations. At the same time it appointed a committee to formulate economic and financial measures to be applied when a state, whether a member of the League or not, “endangers peace by unilateral repudiation of its international obligations.” In conclusion, hope was expressed that a collective European security system would be established “within the framework of the League.”

Hitler replied to the Council's rebuke on April 20 by a protest which, although heralded as a “stinging retort,” was unexpectedly mild. It challenged the Council's right to set itself up as a judge of Germany and rejected the resolution as an “attempt at new discrimination” against the Reich, but reserved the right to reveal later Germany's attitude on various questions raised in the resolution. Hitler was reported to be bitterly resentful against Britain for “deserting” him in Geneva, and bitterly disappointed at Poland's last-minute defection; while the German press denounced the Council's rebuke as another indication that the world is victimizing Germany by a new “war guilt lie.”

77. For discussion of Schleswig-Holstein, cf. Wertheimer, “The Aims of Hitler's Foreign Policy,” cited. For comment on Denmark's action, cf. “La Société des Nations et les Petits Etats,” *Le Temps*, April 30, 1935.

78. For text, cf. League of Nations, Eighty-Fifth (Extraordinary) Session of the Council, *Minutes*, P.V.2(1), p. 2.

THE FRANCO-SOVIET PACT

Pending League decision concerning unilateral treaty repudiation, France and the Soviet Union proceeded to devise measures for safeguarding themselves against sudden German aggression. Following complicated negotiations in the course of which the Soviet Union demanded a pledge of automatic assistance which France refused to give, the two countries signed a five-year pact of mutual assistance in Paris on May 2.⁷⁹ This pact implements the obligations of the two signatories as members of the League. It provides that, in case either is threatened with or in danger of aggression, they will immediately consult regarding measures for the enforcement of Article X of the League Covenant.⁸⁰ Should the League Council fail to reach a unanimous decision regarding a dispute “likely to lead to a rupture,”⁸¹ and should either France or the U.S.S.R. be then subjected to unprovoked aggression by any European state, whether member of the League or not, the two countries undertake to come immediately to each other's assistance.

A protocol of signature attached to the pact limits application of the mutual assistance pledge to cases of aggression involving violation of French or Soviet territory. It also provides that the obligations of the pact shall not be carried out in any way inconsistent with existing treaty obligations—a reference to the Locarno treaty, which prohibits France from attacking Germany without the consent of the League Council. The French government thus avoided the danger of alienating Britain by a pledge of unlimited and automatic assistance to the Soviet Union in contravention of French obligations under the League Covenant and the Locarno treaty. The protocol of signature, moreover, declares that negotiations for the Franco-Soviet pact were intended to complete a security agreement comprising all countries of Northeastern Europe, including Germany, Poland and the Baltic states “bordering on the U.S.S.R.” Since only two of the

79. For text, cf. *New York Times*, May 3, 1935; *Le Temps*, May 5, 1935.

80. This article reads as follows: “The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.”

81. Article XV, paragraph 7, of the Covenant reads as follows: “If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.”

Baltic states—Latvia and Estonia—border on the Soviet Union, it has been assumed that France and the U.S.S.R. hoped to bring Germany into an Eastern Locarno which would exclude Lithuania, thus avoiding controversy over Memel.

While the Franco-Soviet pact has all the earmarks of an alliance, it differs from the pre-war alliance between France and Tsarist Russia on three important points: it is defensive, not both offensive and defensive in character; it will operate within the framework of the League; and it is open to adherence by other countries, including Germany.

Conclusion of the Franco-Soviet pact was followed by efforts to negotiate an Eastern Locarno which would take account of German and Polish reluctance to sign pledges of mutual assistance. With this end in view, M. Laval visited Warsaw on May 10, where he was received without enthusiasm by Foreign Minister Beck, who feared that the Franco-Soviet pact might endanger Poland's position. M. Laval's subsequent visit to Moscow was marked by striking cordiality, and on May 15 the French Foreign Minister and M. Litvinov issued a joint statement inviting Germany and Poland to negotiate a multilateral pact of non-aggression, consultation and non-assistance to an aggressor. This pact would be complemented by bilateral treaties of mutual assistance modeled on the Franco-Soviet pact.⁸² Such a treaty was signed by the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in Prague on May 16; the annex to this document provided that the pledge of mutual assistance would go into effect only if the victim of aggression receives aid from France.⁸³ Soviet-Czechoslovak relations were further cemented on June 4, when an agreement was signed in Prague by which a syndicate of Czechoslovak banks granted the Soviet Union a five-year credit of about \$10,000,000 guaranteed by the Prague government; this credit is to be used by the U.S.S.R. for the purchase of Czechoslovak goods, notably munitions from the Skoda plant. Coordination of defense plans was also discussed in Moscow during the three-day visit paid by Dr. Benes on June 7-10.

CONCLUSION

Both countries regard these preparations as particularly urgent since Chancellor Hitler, in his speech on May 21, gave a flatly negative an-

swer to the Franco-Soviet proposal for an Eastern European pact of consultation, non-aggression and non-assistance to an aggressor. Hitler not only refused to conclude non-aggression pacts with the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania, both of which he bitterly denounced, but subsequently notified France, Britain, Italy and Belgium that the Franco-Soviet treaty of mutual assistance contravenes France's Locarno obligations and should be abrogated if the Locarno treaty, which the proposed Western air pact would complement, is to remain in force. Germany's attitude gives rise to the disquieting assumption that, once it has consolidated its relations in the West, it will undertake a drive to the East with the expectation that incidents provoked by this course can be successfully localized without Western intervention. France and the Soviet Union, however, believe that peace is indivisible, and that a minor incident in Eastern Europe would sooner or later precipitate a world conflict.

Their fear of Germany's designs in that region is based on realization that the security system in the East is both less extensive and less automatic than in the West. Should Germany attack France—which of all the war hypotheses is the least probable—Britain, Italy and Belgium, as guarantors of the Locarno treaty, would be bound to go to France's assistance. The military alliances which France has with Poland and the Little Entente states—Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia—would presumably come into operation, although in such a crisis Poland might follow Germany instead of France. Should the League Council fail to reach a decision on the dispute and should Germany persist in attacking France, the U.S.S.R. would be bound to aid France under the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance.

Far different is the situation in Central and Eastern Europe. Should Germany attempt to absorb Austria—an aim Hitler denied on May 21—Britain, France and Italy are obliged by various treaties and declarations to consult regarding the preservation of Austria's independence, but are not committed to go automatically to its assistance. Moreover, there is still a serious difference of opinion between Italy and the Little Entente as to methods of dealing with the Austrian question.

So far as Eastern Europe is concerned, two principal eventualities may be considered. Since Germany is not in a geographic position to strike directly at the Soviet Union, which it regards as the chief enemy of National Socialism, it would have to attack it through Poland, Czechoslovakia or Lithuania. The Soviet government has always insisted that the German-Polish non-aggression

82. For text of this statement, cf. *New York Times*, May 16, 1935; *Le Temps*, May 17, 1935.

83. For text of this treaty, cf. *Prager Tagblatt* (Prague), May 17, 1935; *Journal des Nations* (Geneva), May 25, 1935. A similar treaty is being negotiated between the Soviet Union and Rumania.

treaty of 1934 was accompanied by a secret agreement in which the Third Reich gave Poland a free hand to seize Soviet Ukraine provided the Polish Corridor and Upper Silesia were returned to Germany. Poland, however, has a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, and might hesitate to attack even with German aid, unless it had some assurance that the U.S.S.R. would receive no help from other European countries; and it knows that should Germany send an army across Polish territory to fight the Soviet Union, the latter would receive assistance from France and Czechoslovakia. In case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia, the Prague government would be in a fairly strong position: its military alliances with France, Rumania and Yugoslavia would come into operation; the Balkan bloc, which in addition to Rumania and Yugoslavia comprise Greece and Turkey, would probably become involved on Czechoslovakia's side; should the League Council fail to reach a decision on the dispute, the U.S.S.R. would be obliged to aid Czechoslovakia under their pact of mutual assistance. The three doubtful countries would be Hungary, Bulgaria and Italy, none of which has much love for the Little Entente, and all of which have been courted by the Third Reich. Should Germany attack Lithuania—and in this eventuality Poland would doubtless support the Third Reich—Lithuania would be in a far less enviable position than Czechoslovakia. True, Estonia and Latvia whose military establishments are infinitesimal compared to that of Germany, would be obliged by the Baltic pact to act in concert with Lithuania; the U.S.S.R., for reasons of national defense, might be expected to come to its aid; but no state in Europe is obliged by treaty to assist Lithuania. The most striking fact is that while Britain has precise obligations to prevent German aggression in the West, its obligations in the East are limited to the action it might be required to take as a member of the League. Under the Covenant all League members would be obliged to go to the aid of a victim of aggression—whether France, Austria, Lithuania or Czechoslovakia—if the League Council unanimously declared Germany to be the aggressor. A unanimous decision, however, might prove difficult to reach; and failing such decision, the Covenant makes no provision for aid to a victim of aggression. It is because of this "gap in the Covenant" that the various European states have com-

plemented their League obligations by a network of crisscrossing alliances and mutual assistance pacts. And it would be entirely logical for Germany—which has withdrawn from the League—to direct its ambitions to the region where the security system is weakest—Eastern Europe, whose most defenseless unit is Lithuania.

IS WAR INEVITABLE?

Can war, under these circumstances, be averted? War is not inevitable in the sense that no workable mechanism can be devised to avoid it. The real danger in Europe is not that war is inevitable, but that it may come to be so regarded by millions of peace-loving people overwhelmed by economic misery and misled by the warlike assertions of dictatorships. How can war be avoided? Admitting, as any one with a sense of reality must admit, that disarmament in the present state of European tension is impossible, there are two principal methods open to the powers which fear German aggression. The first is to outbuild Germany in armaments, especially air forces, and forge a network of military alliances. That method is already familiar to European countries: it led to war in 1914. The second is to strengthen the collective system represented by the League of Nations, to place military force at the League's disposal, and to make the penalties for aggression so obvious and so severe as to deter any country, no matter how militaristic, from resorting to it. This method, contrary to popular judgment which condemns the League for weakness and inaction, has never yet received a fair trial. To bar aggression, however, is merely to prohibit the use of force for the attainment of objectives, some of which, if examined in an international forum, might be found to be legitimate and justified. If peace is to be assured and security restored, organization against aggression must be accompanied by honest efforts to meet the legitimate territorial claims of Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria, and to relieve by constructive international measures the economic plight of millions in Germany and other countries for whom war may seem the lesser of two evils. This task calls for far greater ingenuity, patience and imagination than the waging of war. To succeed in it every one must realize here, as well as in Europe, that peace can be obtained only at a high price—but that it can never be as costly as war.